

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (previously amended) Polymer bead of dry bead structure incorporating a diluent that is highly water-soluble characterized by swelling rapidly when placed in contact with aqueous media to form a water-swollen gel bead.
2. (original) Polymer beads in accordance with claim 1 that are a dry-free-flow powder.
3. – 8 (withdrawn)
9. (original) Agarose-Poly (ethylene glycol) beads made by the method of claim 3.
10. (original) Agarose-Poly (ethylene glycol) beads made by the method of claim 4.
- 11.-14. (withdrawn)
15. (canceled)